

# Sproughton CofE VC Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124752
<b>Local Authority</b>	SUFFOLK LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	319923
<b>Inspection dates</b>	27–28 February 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Judith Matharu HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	99
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Simon Curl
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Jane Needle
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 September 2006
<b>School address</b>	Church Lane Sproughton Ipswich Suffolk IP8 3BB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01473 742182
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Sproughton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School is a smaller than average primary school serving the village of Sproughton and the surrounding area. The vast majority of pupils are of White British backgrounds. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The number of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need is above that found nationally, although the number with learning difficulties and/or disabilities overall is below the national average. The school holds the Activemark Award, the Silver Eco Award and is currently working towards Eco Green Flag accreditation.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Sproughton C of E VC Primary School has improved since the last inspection and is now providing children with a satisfactory education. In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

This school has good capacity to improve further. Standards and achievement are now satisfactory and improving, due to the commitment of everyone in the school to the ongoing improvement strategies in place. However, improving the standard of writing for all pupils across the curriculum remains a priority.

Pupils blossom within the school's caring and supportive environment; consequently, their personal and social skills are good. The welfare and wellbeing of pupils is given careful attention and pupils enjoy positive relationships with adults in school. Teaching and learning has improved significantly since the last inspection and is now satisfactory. There is a shared sense of purpose and good collaboration between teachers and teaching assistants to share ideas and support each other in developing best practice. Good use has been made of continued support from the local authority (LA) which has appropriately influenced teachers' work. Pupils behaviour is good due to consistently reinforced expectations from all staff. Those pupils with complex needs who require individual guidance are supported adequately despite limited facilities for this. The school is aware of the need to improve the facilities available for this work and is currently working with the LA to resolve the issue. The curriculum is sound with some good extension and enrichment opportunities provided. There are weaknesses in the guidance given to pupils on how to improve their work. There are too few opportunities taken to provide clear advice for pupils on how they might do this, particularly with regard to writing.

The newly established leadership team are leading the school's continued improvement with energy and commitment. New staff have been effectively inducted into the school by the headteacher, who continues to drive forward with vision and purpose. The leadership team, including the governing body, share an accurate understanding of the priorities for further development. There is clear ambition and determination evident across the school to continue to raise standards and achievement for all pupils.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children's skills on entry to the school vary considerably from year to year. Currently these are well below those expected for their age. Pupils make mostly good progress in the Foundation Stage in relation to their starting points. Children are happy to come to school and feel secure within the warm and friendly atmosphere that adults create. Teaching is satisfactory and sometimes good. Teaching provides a reasonable balance between practical learning experiences and the direct teaching of key skills. Children especially enjoy practical activities, for example, they enjoyed the weighing and mixing of ingredients for hot cross buns. Adults make good use of these opportunities to develop children's language in a way that is interesting and fun. Free play activities are not monitored rigorously enough to ensure all children experience the full range of activities. New assessment procedures are building an accurate picture of children's progress and are beginning to pinpoint areas in which further work is required.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure teachers' marking is consistently helpful, including the use of learning targets, so that pupils know exactly what they have to do to improve
- Ensure that standards and progress in writing are improved by consistently reinforcing higher expectations whenever pupils are completing written work
- Improve provision for pupils with complex needs through the provision of suitable spaces where staff and children can work

A small proportion of the schools where overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Standards at the end of Year 2 have fluctuated in recent years and in the 2007 tests were just above the national average in reading and mathematics. Results in writing slipped significantly from 2006. In particular, there were no pupils achieving the higher National Curriculum Level 3 in writing. The school have responded to this by implementing a writing action plan across the school, providing staff training opportunities and a focus on shared planning. Structured and regular opportunities for writing for different purposes across the curriculum are developing. This is raising the profile of writing in the school, although it continues to be an ongoing priority, as the quality of pupils' writing remains inconsistent. Current pupil progress data indicates that at least satisfactory progress is now being achieved in writing but in science progress is good.

At Key Stage 2 in 2007, standards were satisfactory in English, but dropped in mathematics and science to below national averages at Level 4. However, the numbers of higher attaining pupils achieving the higher National Curriculum Level 5 in English and science improved in 2007.

The school's progress data shows that the current progress made by pupils at both Key Stages 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall, with good progress evident in the current Year 5.

The school supports pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities satisfactorily despite limited physical space for such work. Consequently, these pupils make similarly satisfactory progress to others in their year group.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. As they progress through the school, pupils show increasing concern for others and display good social skills. They behave well and contribute much to the warm family atmosphere evident throughout the school. Pupils feel safe in school, which they say is free from bullying and where someone will always help if they feel lonely or troubled. They know how to keep fit and healthy and benefit from the many opportunities to be active. They enjoy school, as reflected in their very good attendance and punctuality. Pupils are proud of their work within the school and wider community. Their efforts on the school council have led to playground improvements and to a range of successful fund-raising activities to support local and national charities.

Pupils' have satisfactory basic skills and the vast majority display good manners and confidence. Overall, these place them in a sound position to take the next steps in their education.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Teaching and learning have improved since the previous inspection and are now satisfactory. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to outstanding. Features of the best teaching include high expectations of the standard of work required, very good development of language, detailed planning and the provision of work that closely matches the different abilities of pupils. Recently introduced, rigorous assessment procedures are providing teachers with a more accurate understanding of what their pupils know and can do and they are using this information increasingly effectively when planning lessons, identifying underachieving pupils and planning appropriate support. However, there are still occasions when the work set is too easy or difficult for some pupils and this slows their progress. Teachers usually use questioning well to probe understanding and are confident in the use of computers and interactive white boards to enliven learning and enhance pupils' progress.

The school enjoys close and supportive links with the partner schools that also provide for the dual-registered, part-time pupils. Provision for pupils with other learning difficulties is satisfactory and they make sound progress.

Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and provide plenty of positive comments that help to encourage and motivate. However, there are too few written comments that provide clear, specific feedback on what pupils could have done better or clear guidance on how they can improve.

In addition, too often teachers accept poorly presented work and too many mis-spelt words without comment and this is not helping the school to raise standards in writing. Teachers make sound use of support staff.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The curriculum is broad and meets statutory requirements. The school has good plans to develop it further. Improving pupils' literacy skills is at the heart of the school's approach. Consequently, this focus is reinforced through the school's topic based approach across the wider curriculum. However, improving the opportunities for better quality writing across the curriculum remains a priority. The introduction of French in Years 3 and 4 is developing successfully, with pupils displaying enthusiasm for their learning. A useful link has been made with a school in France to develop pupils' work in the language. The provision for music is currently under developed; the school has plans to introduce class music sessions regularly from a visiting teacher. Sporting opportunities are well provided for by a good range of activities, both within the curriculum and through extra-curricular provision. The school is particularly successful in introducing pupils to different activities and signposting links to external clubs or other provision in the community. The recent award of Activemark illustrates the school's success in this area. A range of interesting trips and visits, for example the planned overnight stay at a model African village for Years 5 and 6, complement and suitably enrich the curriculum experience. Such trips and visits are suitably followed up with interesting work in school.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 3

This school looks after pupils' personal well-being well and its supportive and caring ethos ensures that they feel safe and well cared for. Health and safety and child protection procedures meet current requirements. Close links with a wide range of professionals and external agencies ensure good support for the most vulnerable pupils and those who face particular difficulties. This high level of personal care and support effectively promotes pupils' good personal development and helps them to make steady progress in their work. Teaching assistants are well organised to support pupils with a range of learning needs, some of which are complex.

Educational guidance is satisfactory and is reflected in pupils' sound achievement. The school has recently reviewed its target setting system and each class now has three targets for reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils know what these are and they help to guide pupils' improvement. Pupils are developing the skills and awareness needed to review their own progress and that of others. Teachers regularly mark pupils' work, but rarely refer to pupils' learning targets and do not always provide sufficiently clear guidance on exactly how pupils can improve.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher's continued strong leadership provides the school community with a clear direction and this has lifted expectations and is helping to raise standards. She maintains a clear focus on improving outcomes for pupils. Self-evaluation is accurate. Following the strengthening of the leadership team, the school's capacity to improve is now good. The school's Key Stage co-ordinators are growing successfully into their new roles. They demonstrate understanding of the school's priorities and are fully committed to whole school improvement. This newly established team has made a promising start, although it is too soon to judge the full impact of many of the various improvement actions underway. However, there is evidence of a positive impact on improving teaching and learning. For example, the quality of planning has improved. Further, closer monitoring of teaching and learning through peer observations is accurately identifying where improvement actions can most usefully be targeted. There is a strong sense of teamwork and good collaboration between staff to share ideas and new approaches.

The work of governors has developed well in monitoring the school and holding it to account, whilst also providing support for its work.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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### Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

03 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sproughton C of E VC Primary School, Sproughton, Suffolk, IP8 3BB

As you know, we visited your school recently to check on how things are progressing. I am very pleased to tell you that we found that Sproughton is now providing you with a satisfactory education and no longer needs to be in the category known as 'special measures.' This is because there have been many improvements, which we saw during our recent visit.

You are making satisfactory progress and there are positive signs in many pieces of your work that you are doing well, particularly in mathematics and science. However, there is still some work to be done to improve standards in writing, which is something we have asked your teachers to consider.

We were impressed with your good behaviour in lessons and around school and the personal and social skills you are developing. Many of you spoke to us with confidence about your school and the aspects you particularly enjoy. Your teachers teach you soundly and are determined to find ways to make your learning interesting. They try to make sure you enjoy trips and visits that are fun to do and helpful for your learning.

Your headteacher Mrs Needle leads the school well and has made sure that all of your new teachers have settled into school quickly. They are becoming a good team!

All of your staff want you to do well and are trying hard to provide the best for you. We have asked them to think about three things. Firstly, to make sure that your teachers mark your work with comments that tell you exactly what you need to do to improve. You can help by taking note of these and acting upon the advice offered. Secondly, we feel that more attention could be given to improving the standard of your writing, particularly spellings and the presentation of your work, which is not always as neat as it might be! Finally, we feel that some additional spaces could be provided in school for pupils to work quietly on their own or in small groups, at those times when this would be helpful.

We were impressed with the improvements we saw and feel sure that things will continue to improve at Sproughton. We wish you every success in the future.

Best wishes,

Judith Matharu

Her Majesty's Inspector